



*Building Homes.  
Building Communities.  
Building Hope.*

August 9, 2016

Ted Bench  
Senior Planner  
County of San Luis Obispo County  
Department of Planning and Building  
976 Osos St., Rm. 200  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

Dear Ted,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the County's draft *Fair Housing Choice/Fair Housing Plan of the County of San Luis Obispo*. It was a privilege to be selected to be part of the stakeholders interviewed for the plan, and I appreciate your willingness to listen to my concerns with the plan.

On its face, the plan does a good job examining San Luis Obispo County and identifying some of the housing issues we are facing. We support the creation of a Fair Housing Authority within the County and applaud the plan's recognition of the affordable housing crisis, including the lack of funding for the construction of new affordable homes, which we are currently experiencing. As a provider and preserver of affordable housing, Habitat for Humanity for San Luis Obispo County is strongly advocating that the County and the County Board of Supervisors begin addressing this issue more seriously than they have in the past, including this proposed plan and the increase in in lieu fees collected by the County.

However, we do not believe the draft *Fair Housing Plan* adequately addresses the housing difficulties and restraints experienced by all very low and low-income residents in this County who are being severely impacted by the housing shortage.

Of particular concern to HFHSLOCO are our senior residents and those with physical disabilities. Two years ago HFHSLOCO launched an Aging in Place program that is part of our Home Preservation and Neighborhood Revitalization efforts. We have been working in the Sierra Bonita Village, a senior community in Paso Robles, and as a result have a better understanding of the housing difficulties our low-income seniors are experiencing. Specifically, there are few rental opportunities for seniors and few senior care facilities that can assist those with more serious health issues. As a result we have found the following:

- Low-income seniors are often living 2-4 in a rental unit intended for a maximum of two people. The units are over-crowded and frequently in poor condition.
- Many rental houses that low-income seniors live in are often sold to investors. The seniors must then move from the houses and frequently cannot find adequate housing or apartments they can afford.
- Low-income seniors who are renting houses and apartments are afraid to complain about the poor condition of the units they are renting for fear the property owner will either cancel their lease

189 Cross Street • San Luis Obispo • CA • 93401 • PO Box 613 • San Luis Obispo • CA • 93406  
Phone: 805.782.0687 • Fax: 805.782.0687 • [www.hfhsloco.org](http://www.hfhsloco.org) • [info@hfhsloco.org](mailto:info@hfhsloco.org)

because of the complaints or do the necessary repairs and raise the rent to levels beyond what the seniors can afford.

- The rental rates overall in the County for housing and/or apartments are extremely high and beyond the reach of low-income seniors living primarily on social security.
- There are few low-income senior apartment complexes, and those that do exist do not significantly accommodate the physical restrictions that seniors experience as they age, such as adequate elevator access to all floors, accommodations for emergency egress when the elevators are shut down during an emergency, and an adequate number of main floor units for those with serious physical challenges.

In all these cases, having an adequate supply of affordable low-income housing for all low-income residents, and in particular for our senior residents, would change the stress and unacceptable circumstances they are experiencing. Unfortunately, the truth is that in our County our very low and low-income residents are often forgotten, and the draft *Fair Housing Plan* does not address this critically serious situation.

We are asking that the County staff and the County Board of Supervisors revise the proposed *Plan* so that it is inclusive of all the housing challenges in the County and not only a few. The housing crisis is far more encompassing than the *Plan* outlines, and we do not think that our housing crisis can be realistically and holistically addressed without a *Plan* revision that provides a complete and thorough review of the problem. We ask that this be remedied with an analysis of how our housing crisis is affecting all resident demographics -- all ages, all cultures, all genders, and all income levels.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of Habitat for Humanity for SLO County, thank you for considering our request for revision to the plan. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this issue further, please do not hesitate to contact me at 782-0687 or by email at [ceo@hfhsloco.org](mailto:ceo@hfhsloco.org).

In partnership,



Julia K. Ogden  
Chief Executive Officer

9/13/2016

County Housing Plan - Ted Bench

# County Housing Plan

Pearltrans@aol.com

Thu 9/1/2016 8:23 PM

To: Ted Bench <tbench@co.slo.ca.us>;

Please give priority to:

1. A campground for homeless as proposed by Hope's Village
2. Identifying and abolishing the roadblocks in the building code that hinder Tiny Homes. Tiny Homes are more affordable than larger homes. They are good for singles and low-income and homeless.
3. Adopt the principle that everyone has a right to be somewhere. Don't make it illegal for homeless to be anywhere in the County, and at the same time provide nowhere for most homeless to go.
4. Low-rent, subsidized mobile home parks, RV parks and places for old mobile homes and RV's to provide housing for homeless and low-income persons.

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